

**Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights
Screening Template**

*****Completed Screening Templates are public documents and will be posted on the Trust's website*****

See 'Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Screening Guidance Notes' (on SharePoint) for further background information on the relevant legislation and for help in answering the questions on this template.

(1) Information about the Policy/Proposal

(1.1) Name of the policy/proposal

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in the Workplace Policy

(1.2) Is this a new, existing or revised policy/proposal?

This is a revised policy.

(1.3) What is it trying to achieve (intended aims/outcomes)?

The purpose of this policy is to support employees who experience domestic and/or sexual violence/abuse and to deal appropriately with alleged or confirmed perpetrators of domestic or sexual abuse among our workforce.

This policy outlines the Trust's commitment to:

- providing a working environment where all employees who experience domestic and sexual violence and/or abuse can feel safe, confident, and able to seek support and help in the workplace.
- providing support and information to employees, including external support agencies, affected by domestic and sexual violence and/or abuse.
- encouraging a climate of honesty and openness in which it is safe to raise concerns.

The aim of this policy is to exercise both the social and employer responsibility by re-affirming an individual's human right to live free from violence, abuse, and threats and to provide a safe and supportive environment for all employees who experience domestic and sexual violence and abuse.

(1.4) Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy/proposal?

All section 75 categories have the potential to benefit from the Trust's **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in the Workplace Policy**. From an Equality perspective it addresses an important issue that affects Section 75 groups and in particular some 'vulnerable' Section 75 groups – see table 2.1 below.

(1.5) Who owns and who implements the policy/proposal - where does it originate, for example DoH, HSCB, the Trust?

Southern Health & Social Care Trust - Workplace Health and Wellbeing Steering Group

(1.6) Are there any factors that could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/proposal/decision? (Financial, legislative or other constraints?)

- The ability or inability to communicate the Policy including key contacts, sources of advice and information will contribute to or detract from the intended aim to 'Raise awareness and identify the impact of domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in the Workplace on employees'.
- The cooperation of all staff or lack of cooperation could contribute to or detract from the intended aim to 'Maximise the safety of our employees'.

(1.7) Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy/proposal/decision could impact upon? (E.g. staff, service users, other public sector organisations, trade unions, professional bodies, independent sector, voluntary and community groups etc.)

Internal - Staff, Management, Trade Unions, HR, Occupational Health & Wellbeing

External - PSNI, Education Authority, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Probation Board Northern Ireland, Women's Aid, Men's Advisory Project, NSPCC, General Practitioner Representative and Trade Unions

This list is not exhaustive

(1.8) Other policies with a bearing on this policy/proposal (for example regional policies) - what are they and who owns them?

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

SHSCT:

- Our People Framework
- Workplace Health and Wellbeing Framework
- Health and Safety at Work Policy
- Management of Violence and Aggression (MOVA) Policy
- Conflict, Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure (Regional)
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (Regional)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Regional)
- Flexible Working Policy
- Time Off Work Policy

[Violence and Aggression in the Workplace HSC Framework](#)

This list is not exhaustive

(2) Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

2.1 Staff Affected by this Policy/Proposal / 2.2 Composition of Southern Trust Workforce – all staff are potentially affected by this policy.

| Section 75 Group | Southern Trust Workforce Profile - Jan 2026 | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Gender | Female | 85.4% |
| | Male | 14.6% |
| Religion | Protestant | 33.9% |
| | Roman Catholic | 55.9% |
| | Neither | 10.2% |
| Political Opinion | Broadly Unionist | 8.9% |
| | Broadly Nationalist | 9.9% |
| | Other | 7.2% |
| | Do Not Wish To Answer/Not Known | 74% |
| Age | 16-24 | 6.6% |
| | 25-34 | 22.7% |
| | 35-44 | 28% |
| | 45-54 | 21.1% |
| | 55-64 | 17.5% |
| | 65+ | 4.1% |
| Marital Status | Single | 32.1% |
| | Married/Civil Partnership | 55.9% |
| | Other/Not Known | 12% |
| Dependant Status | Caring for a Child/Children/Dependant Older Person/Person(s) With a Disability | 13.8% |
| | None | 31.9% |
| | Not Known | 54.3% |
| Disability | Yes | 2.8% |
| | No | 73.3% |
| | Not Known | 23.9% |
| Ethnicity | Bangladeshi | 0.01% |
| | Black African | 0.56% |
| | Black Caribbean | 0.01% |
| | Black Other | 0.03% |
| | Chinese | 0.08% |
| | Filipino | 0.55% |
| | Indian | 1.24% |
| | Irish Traveller | 0.01% |
| | Pakistani | 0.15% |
| | Mixed Ethnic | 0.24% |
| | White | 73.5% |
| | Not Known | 23.62% |
| Sexual Orientation towards: | Opposite Sex | 58.3% |
| | Same Sex | 1.2% |
| | Same and Opposite Sex | 0.3% |
| | Do Not Wish To Answer/Not Known | 40.2% |

2.3 Patients / Clients Affected

This policy will not affect any service users. This is an internal policy for employees only.

2.4 Southern Trust's Area Population Profile – Census 2011

| <i>(Section 75 Group)</i> | <i>Trust's Area Population Profile (Population of 358,034)</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|--|--|--|
| Gender | Female | 50.2 |
| | Male | 49.8 |
| Religion | Protestant | 35.5 |
| | Roman Catholic | 57.0 |
| | Other | 7.5 |
| Political Opinion | Not collected | |
| Age | 0-15 | 22.5 |
| | 16-24 | 10.2 |
| | 25-44 | 26.5 |
| | 45-64 | 25.2 |
| | 65-84 | 13.8 |
| | 85+ | 1.8 |
| Marital Status (aged 16+ years) | Single | 28.1 |
| | Married/Civil Partnership | 37.7 |
| | Other | 34.2 |
| Dependent Status | Caring for a Child/Children | 25.8% care for a dependent child/children |
| Disability | Yes | 21.8 |
| | No | 78.2 |
| Ethnicity | Asian Other | 0.4 |
| | Bangladeshi | 0 |
| | Black African | 0.4 |
| | Black Caribbean | 0 |
| | Black Other | 0.4 |
| | Chinese | 0.3 |
| | Filipino | 0.1 |
| | Indian | 0.2 |
| | Irish Traveller | 0.3 |
| | Mixed Ethnic Group | 0.8 |
| | Arab | 0.06 |
| | Roma | 0.08 |
| | Other | 0.2 |
| | Pakistani | 0.1 |
| | White | 96.5 |
| Sexual Orientation | Heterosexual | 69.8 |
| | LGBTQ+ | 1.1 |
| | Not Stated | 29.1 |

2.5 Northern Ireland Health And Social Care Workforce Key Statistics

According to the 2025 Census figures some key stats for the HSC are:

- The HSC workforce grew by 22% (11,944.8 WTE) between the 2016 and 2025 Censuses.
- The largest employer in the HSC was the Belfast Trust with 21,191 (19,038.9 WTE) staff or 28% of all HSC staff.
- The largest Occupational Family was Nursing & Midwifery with 24,887 (22,269.3 WTE) staff or 33% of all HSC staff.
- Over two thirds (34%, 22,402.2 WTE) of WTE HSC staff were employed at Agenda for Change Bands 1 to 4.
- Over three quarters (78% or 58,354 headcount) of HSC employees were female.

(3) Needs, experiences and priorities

(3.1) Taking into account the information above what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the Section 75 categories and for both service users and staff.

(NB: Use relevant statistical and qualitative data to complete the table below)

| Section 75 Category | Details of Needs, Experiences and Priorities | |
|---------------------|---|---------------|
| | Staff | Service Users |
| Gender | <p>Women represent 85.6% of the workforce indicating that there may be a higher uptake of the Policy by females.</p> <p>Research has revealed that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men experience domestic violence / abuse in their lifetime. During the 12 months period ending March 2025, PSNI recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,028 incidents of sexual offences • 69% of victims were female; 31% of victims were male <p>Research reveals that isolation is a factor which has a bearing on inequalities for marginalised women e.g. lone parents, women with disabilities or from ethnic minority communities or women who are lesbian LGBTQ+ have additional barriers to accessing support for domestic violence.</p> | N/A |
| Age | <p>Older people will have a higher need of protection as they are often more vulnerable. However, children and young people can also be classed as vulnerable. Over 30% of domestic violence starts or escalates during pregnancy with around 32,000-children living with domestic abuse NI. One in six older people are victims of some form of abuse and on average older people experience domestic abuse for twice as long before seeking help. Staff of all ages can be affected and or victims of Domestic Violence and support will be available to all.</p> | N/A |
| Religion | Nil of Note | |

| Section 75 Category | Details of Needs, Experiences and Priorities | |
|---------------------|---|---------------|
| | Staff | Service Users |
| Political Opinion | Nil of Note | |
| Marital Status | Research from the crime survey reveals couples who have separated are more likely to suffer partner abuse than those who are married. 8.7% of separated men and 16.8% of separated women suffered partner abuse in 2014/15 while only 1.5% of married men and 2.4% of married women did so. | N/A |
| Dependent Status | Just over 1 in 5 women living in lone parent households were victims of domestic abuse (22.6%) compared with around 1 in 15 of those living in a household with other adults and children (6.7%) or a household with no children (7.7%). The pattern was similar for men, with an estimated 11.4% of men from lone parent households experiencing domestic abuse compared with 3.9% of men living in a household with other adults and children and 4.8% living in a household with no children. | N/A |
| Disability | <p>A review by Public Health England (2015) confirmed that people with disabilities are more vulnerable to domestic abuse, experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and experience more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people.</p> <p>SAFE LIVES reports that women with a disability are twice as likely to experience abuse as non-disabled women yet MARAC data indicates that only 3.9% of referrals are for women with a disability.</p> <p>Certain disabilities, particularly physical disabilities may decrease an individual's ability to escape from their abuser, other disabilities can limit a person's ability to understand or recognise abuse. <u>Disabled survivors Too Domestic abuse spotlight – Safe Lives</u></p> | N/A |
| Ethnicity | <p>How someone experiences domestic abuse is often impacted by their cultural background. Each victim/survivor brings cultural norms with them that influences how they experience and react to domestic abuse. In 2024/25 in Northern Ireland Women's Aid reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 women and 364 children stayed in one of its emergency accommodation refuges. • They supported a further 5,810 women living in the community. • They supported women who spoke 55 different languages. | N/A |
| Sexual Orientation | <p>11% of LGBTQIA+ people had faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year.</p> <p>Research shows 1 in 4 lesbian or bisexual women experience domestic abuse, 4 in 10 gay or bisexual men experience domestic abuse and 80% of transgender people have experienced domestic abuse from a partner or an ex.</p> <p>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) people are affected in very similar ways to heterosexual people. However, they</p> | N/A |

| Section 75 Category | Details of Needs, Experiences and Priorities | |
|---------------------|---|---------------|
| | Staff | Service Users |
| | face that added fear of being 'outed' if they report the abuse. <u>LGBT+ People's Experiences of Domestic Abuse: a report on Galop's domestic abuse advocacy service Galop</u> | |

(3.2) Provide details of how you have involved stakeholders, views of colleagues, service users and staff etc when screening this policy/proposal.

The policy was developed in partnership with a sub group of the staff health and wellbeing steering group. The revised Policy was also shared for comments with the Assistant Director of CYPS & Chair of the Southern Area Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership, Deputy Director of HR Services and Head of Employee Relations, Sexual Health Improvement Lead, staff side representatives and the Domestic Abuse Toolkit Sub Group.

(4) Screening Questions

You now have to assess whether the impact of the policy/proposal is major, minor or none. You will need to make an informed judgement based on the information you have gathered.

| (4.1) What is the likely impact of equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy/proposal, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? | | | |
|--|--|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Section 75 category | Details of policy/proposal impact | | Level of impact? Minor/major/none |
| | Staff | Service Users | |
| Gender | The Trusts Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in the Workplace Policy is a positive intervention created with the intention to support and guide all staff that may be experiencing domestic abuse and is intended to aid in the application of the policy and its aims. | NA | Minor positive |
| Age | | | |
| Religion | | | |
| Political Opinion | | | |
| Marital Status | | | |
| Dependent Status | | | |
| Disability | | | |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| Sexual Orientation | | | |

| (4.2) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories? | |
|--|---|
| Section 75 category | Please provide details |
| Gender | See table 3.1 above. Must ensure that the Policy is fairly and sensitively applied |
| Age | See above |
| Religion | See above |
| Political Opinion | See above |
| Marital Status | See above |
| Dependent Status | See above |
| Disability | See above |
| Ethnicity | See above |
| Sexual Orientation | See above |

| (4.3) To what extent is the policy/proposal likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none | | |
|---|--|---|
| Good relations category | Details of policy/proposal impact | Level of impact Minor/major/none |
| Religious belief | | (see section 4.1) |
| Political opinion | | |
| Racial group | | |

| (4.4) Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | |
|--|---|
| Good relations category | Please provide details |
| Religious belief | This Policy will be implemented in partnership with all relevant parties in particular Trade Union Representatives. All critical partners will have a role to play in the implementation of this Policy and advice will be taken from external organisations. |
| Political opinion | |
| Racial group | |

(5) Consideration of Disability Duties

(5.1) How does the policy/proposal encourage disabled people to participate in public life and promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

The Trust is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all service users and staff in line with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with disabilities. The Trust has a number of policies/plans in place including a Disability Action Plan, aimed at encouraging disabled people participation in public life and promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.

The Policy is intended to reach all staff and all staff with or without a disability can receive the help, support and guide that is available.

(6) Consideration of Human Rights

The Trust has a duty to act compatibly and must take Human Rights considerations into account in its day-to-day functions/activities.

(6.1) How does the policy/proposal impact on Human Rights?
Complete for each of the articles

| Article | Positive impact | Negative impact = human right interfered with or restricted | Neutral impact |
|---|-----------------|---|----------------|
| Article 2 – Right to life | ✓ | | |
| Article 3 – Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment | ✓ | | |
| Article 4 – Right to freedom from slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour | | | ✓ |
| Article 5 – Right to liberty & security of person | ✓ | | |
| Article 6 – Right to a fair & public trial within a reasonable time | | | ✓ |
| Article 7 – Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law & no punishment without law | | | ✓ |
| Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence. | ✓ | | |
| Article 9 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion | | | ✓ |

| Article | Positive impact | Negative impact = human right interfered with or restricted | Neutral impact |
|--|-----------------|---|----------------|
| Article 10 – Right to freedom of expression | | | ✓ |
| Article 11 – Right to freedom of assembly & association | | | ✓ |
| Article 12 – Right to marry & found a family | | | ✓ |
| Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention rights | | | ✓ |
| 1st protocol Article 1 – Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions & protection of property | | | ✓ |
| 1st protocol Article 2 – Right of access to education | | | ✓ |

Please note: If you have identified potential negative impact in relation to any of the Articles in the table above, speak to your line manager and/or Equality Unit on tel: 028 375 64151. It may also be necessary to seek legal advice.

(6.2) Please outline any actions you will take to promote awareness of human rights and evidence that human rights have been taken into consideration in decision making processes.

Ongoing Human Rights Awareness Training and staff completion of ‘Making a Difference’ – Equality, Good Relations and Human Right e-learning training. Considering human rights aspects as an integral part of the Trust’s decision making processes and in this instance policy development, implementation and review – see also 8.1 monitoring arrangements.

(7) Screening Decision

(7.1) Given the answers in Section 4 of this template, how would you categorise the impacts of this decision or policy/proposal? *(Please tick one option below and list your reasons for the decision in 7.2 below)*

| | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| Major impact | EQIA Required? <i>(Delete as appropriate)</i> | |
| | | No |

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Minor impact | + Minor | Mitigation Required | Alternative Policy Required |
| | | No | No |

| | |
|------------------|--------------|
| No impact | Screened Out |
|------------------|--------------|

(7.2) Please give reasons for your decision and detail any mitigation or alternative policies considered.

The Policy will have a minor positive impact and is therefore screened out for an EQIA, as the intended aims of the Policy are to set in place a framework to offer support to employees in addressing problems arising from domestic abuse; maximise the safety of our employees and deal effectively with perpetrators of domestic abuse among our workforce as appropriate.

All section 75 categories have the potential to benefit from the Trust's Workplace Policy and Guide on Domestic Abuse. From an Equality perspective it addresses an important issue that affects Section 75 groups and in particular some 'vulnerable' Section 75 groups – see table 3.1. It furthers the Trust's equality and human rights obligations by providing a support system for ALL staff who wish to avail of the help.

The Trust will monitor the uptake of this policy and later identify on-going and new trends.

(7.3) Do you consider the policy/proposal needs to be subjected to ongoing screening? NB: for strategies/policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages – screen at various stages during implementation.

| | |
|-----|---|
| Yes | |
| No | ✓ |

(8) Monitoring

(8.1) Please detail how you will monitor the effect of the policy/proposal for equality of opportunity and good relations, disability duties and human rights?

This Policy will be reviewed in light of operational experience and updated according - in line with the Trust's default position to review policies at least once every 3 years/sooner where it is necessary to do.

Approved Lead Officer: Maxine Williamson

Position: Deputy HR Director, Workforce and Organisational Development

Email: Maxine.Williamson@southerntrust.hscni.net

Telephone No: Tel: 028 3756 4286
Mob: 07795561288

Date: 10/02/26

Policy/proposal screened by: Maxine Williamson, Deputy HR Director, WOD & Jane Carr, Organisational Development Practitioner

Please forward completed screening template to Equality.Unit@southerntrust.hscni.net for inclusion in the Trust's Policy Screening Reports which are uploaded to the Trust's website.